

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) RECIPIENT FINGERPRINT IMAGING

FEBRUARY 11, 2010

OVERVIEW

Last year the Legislature passed and the Governor signed bills that added several program integrity components to the IHSS program.

Assembly Bill (ABX4 19), Fourth Extraordinary Legislative Session (Chapter 17, Statutes of 2009), enacted a new requirement for fingerprinting IHSS recipients. Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section 12305.73 was added.

The new law also exempts certain IHSS recipients from the fingerprint requirement

Those who are minors; and

Those who are physically unable to provide fingerprints due to amputation or physical limitations.

The new fingerprint-imaging requirement is intended to ensure that eligible individuals receive assistance and to prevent and to deter duplicate aid.

(WIC) section 12305.73 requires:

For any recipient whose initial client assessment occurs on or after April 1, 2010, he or she shall be fingerprinted at the same time of initial assessment by a social worker or designated county staff in the recipient's home. For any recipient already receiving IHSS on April 1, 2010, a fingerprint image will be obtained during the recipient's next reassessment.

Fingerprint imaging information obtained from a recipient pursuant to this section shall:

remain confidential, and

shall only be used for identification purposes directly connected with the provision of IHSS to that recipient and program integrity.

The state currently has an established computer system for collecting fingerprints from applicants for CalWORKs and Food Stamps. The existing computer system collects photo images of applicants along with their fingerprints.

Photo images are a reasonable non-intrusive additional component of identity validation and verification which assists the department. Experience has shown that use of photos in conjunction with fingerprint imaging is a key resource in:

- Verifying an individual's identity.

- Helping counties resolve fingerprint matching issues.

As an example: A social worker has scheduled interviews with four recipients in one day. During one of these visits, the social worker imaged a recipient on the wrong case. The other three recipients were imaged correctly.

When the match responses are returned to the workstation, they will show that there are two cases with the same fingerprints. Without the pictures, the only way to determine which set of fingerprints belong to which case would be to go back to one or both client's houses and look at their fingerprints.

Eliminating photo images from the central recipient fingerprint database may delay the social workers in resolving fingerprint match issues and possibly delay benefits to the recipient.

Eliminating photo images would increase the workload of the county staff responsible for resolving fingerprint match and identity issues.

Eliminating photo images may inconvenience recipients as county staff may have to go out to the recipient's home to validate the fingerprint image information in the recipient's case file.

County staff may not be able to capture the fingerprint image of some IHSS recipients, due to medical reasons. In these cases, the photo would be the primary means of identifying the recipient.

The new law also requires that CDSS in consultation with the county welfare departments shall develop protocols and procedures for obtaining fingerprint images of individuals who are being assessed or reassessed to receive IHSS.

Upon completion of the development of protocols and procedures, CDSS shall be authorized to take the necessary steps to implement this section by April 1, 2010.

CDSS has elected to include other stakeholders in this consultation process and is seeking your input as we develop materials and procedures as we move to implement these changes.

Some of the things we will be looking at:

Guidance /procedures/policy when a usable print can't be obtained

Procedure/policy/ACL re: Other physical limitations

Guidance to counties re: photos

Informational brochure/materials for recipients